

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-9000a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

Historic name Runyon, Damon, House
Other name/site number Runyan, Alfred Lee, House / 161-3490-013

2. Location

Street & number 400 Osage Street ☐ not for publication
City or town Manhattan ☐ vicinity
State Kansas Code KS County Riley Code 161 Zip code 66502

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☒ nationally ☐ statewide ☐ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Richard D. Lankford DSHPO 10-15-04
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Kansas State Historical Society

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional
Comments.)

Signature of commenting official /Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

- ☐ entered in the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register ☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other, (explain:)

Damon Runyon House
Name of Property

Riley Co., Kansas
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing
1	
	buildings
	sites
	structures
	objects
1	total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register**

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter Categories from instructions)

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce: Professional

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Folk House, National

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: Limestone
Walls: Wood

Weatherboard

Roof: Asphalt

Other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Damon Runyon House
Name of Property

Riley Co., Kansas
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
- ☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☒ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Literature

Performing Arts

Period of Significance

1880-1882

Significant Dates

1880

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Runyon, Damon

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ Previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey

- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering
Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Riley Co., Kansas
County and State

Acreage of Property Less than one

1

1	4	7	1	0	5	9	0	4	3	3	9	8	8	0
Zone		Easting						Northing						

2

Figure 1 consists of two diagrams, labeled 3 and 4, illustrating the construction of a 2D grid. Diagram 3 shows a grid with three axes: Zone (vertical), Easting (horizontal), and Northing (diagonal). The Zone axis is labeled with '3' at the top. The Easting axis is labeled with 'Easting' and the Northing axis is labeled with 'Northing'. Diagram 4 shows the same grid after a shift. The Zone axis is shifted to the right, and the Easting axis is shifted to the left. The Northing axis remains in the same position. The labels 'Zone', 'Easting', and 'Northing' are still present, but the axes have been repositioned relative to each other.

☐ See continuation sheet

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

Name/title	Bonnie Lynn-Sherow, PhD				
Organization	Bluestem Historical Consulting	Date	June 1, 2004		
Street & number	529 Pierre	Telephone	785-565-0086		
City or town	Manhattan	State	KS	Zip code	66502

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

Additional items

(Check with SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Name	Manhattan Historic Properties				
Street & number	529 Pierre		Telephone	785-565-0086	
City or town	Manhattan		State	KS	Zip code 66502

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Description

The Damon Runyon House is an American Folk House located at 400 Osage Street in Manhattan Kansas, situated on the northwest corner of the intersection of Osage and 4th Streets. It is located in Ward Two of Manhattan in the earliest platted section of the city. Constructed in 1880, this symmetrical one-and-a-half story, T-plan, hall-and-parlor house has a partial basement and a partial attic. The house faces Osage Street, and is side gabled with a central cross gable. The back portion of the house (stem of the T) is covered by a gabled roof and was extended in 1955. The Runyon House is reminiscent of older simple side-gabled, hall-and-parlor houses, two rooms wide and one room deep with a rear extension.

Fenestration throughout the house is nearly all original. The frames, sashes and simple lintels are all of wood. The 1880 house contains double-hung, four-over-four windows with sash pins. The 1955 one-room addition contains four nearly square one-over-one, double-hung windows of a common size and shape. The current first-floor bathroom was originally a west side porch with an entrance to the cellar. It is unknown when this porch was converted to a fully plumbed bathroom, but one family member (now deceased) raised in the house, and whose grandmother and mother lived in the house for over 80 years before her, remembered in a 2003 interview that it was converted some time in the 1920s. One outbuilding, a summer kitchen located to the rear of the original building and visible in a photo taken in 1888, was removed at some point, likely to make room for the single-story extension (now the kitchen) or perhaps the converted porch/bathroom on the west side of the original house.

The front, or southern, elevation retains nearly all of its original features, including three double-hung windows, the central front door, and original clapboard siding and wood trim. The facade is symmetrical, with the central front door flanked by two double-hung windows on the first floor and two half-sized windows (two-over-two) just above them on the second floor. A full-sized, double-hung window is located directed above the front door, rising into the clapboard space afforded by the central cross gable. The front door facing Osage Street is a wood two-panel door below with a glass inset above. During the restoration of the Runyon House, it was determined that the original house also had a one-story, shed-roofed porch spanning nearly the entire front facade. The exact dimensions of the porch, as well as its construction and details, were not known until the discovery of a newspaper article published in 1948 that featured a photo of the front facade of the house. From this photo, and after approval from the NPS and on the advice of the State Historic Preservation Office, the owners have reconstructed the porch.

The east facade of the house is next in importance in terms of public visibility as it faces Fourth Street, a main thoroughfare in downtown Manhattan. This side of the house shows the T plan of the house clearly, with the one-and-a-half story section of the house visible on the gabled end connected to the single-story stem. The tall gabled side of the building contains three four-over-four, double-hung windows, two on the first floor and one window on the second floor centered above and between the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Section number 7 Page 2

first-floor windows to form a perfect triangle. The one-story extension to the north of the gabled front section of the house has a shed-roofed porch over the central door leading into the dining room/kitchen portion of the house. This porch is of simple wooden construction, held up on two sides through attachment to the house in the corner of the T and by a simple chamfered porch column at the northeast corner that marks the end of the original building as constructed in 1880. This simple porch roof also shelters a north-facing door that leads directly into the parlor room. An original four-over-four, double-hung window is located just north of the dining room door. The 1950s extension also contains a window and a door, both of which are noticeably more modern than the doors and windows in the original 1880s structure. The very visible moderately pitched roof of the single story is of composite asphalt shingles reminiscent of the original cedar shakes. This roofline clearly shows a small dip at the junction of the 1955 addition. Overall, the 1955 extension of the back of the house is not incompatible in shape and form with the original structure. At the time the 1955 extension was constructed, it was not sheathed in clapboard but was covered in the same asbestos siding that was applied over the clapboard of the original house sometime between 1948 and 1955. The current owners opted to install new cedar clapboard siding compatible with the original clapboard on the 1955 addition so as not to break up the overall visual impact of the building as seen from the street.

The north facade of the building is the simplest side of the house. The single-story, one-room gabled end of the 1955 addition is fenestrated by a central pair of one-over-one windows. Also visible at ground level is the overall porch floor and shed-roof leading to the exterior parlor door on the east side of the house and a small north-facing eyebrow window on the west side of the house. (This too was originally a porch but was enclosed for use as a bathroom sometime in the 1920s.) Above the single story can be seen the north side of the second story of the original house. This facade contains two original single-sash, four-pane windows, one at each end just below the roof line.

The west facade of the building is the least visible to the public as it faces a dense hedge of mature shrubs and a privacy fence a few feet away on the property line between the Runyon House and the next house on Osage Street. This facade has one modern double-paned, one-over-one window on the first floor extension and one oddly sized, double-hung, one-over-one window in the bathroom addition. The one-and-a-half story, gable end front portion of the house is identical in shape and fenestration as the east side of the house. The foundation on the west side of this section of the house contains a small basement window through which some of the newly installed heating and cooling hoses are located.

The interior layout of the Damon Runyon House is typical of folk houses constructed in this period. The front door entrance opens into a small open hall leading directly to the east side parlor room. To the left of the front door is a door leading to the downstairs bedroom where Damon Runyon was born. The interior west wall of the parlor is curved at the front door entrance lending a hint of formality to an otherwise plain room. The room contains three windows, on the south and east walls and an exterior door leading to the east side porch and a 12-light French door leading to the single-story dining room on

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Section number 7 Page 3

the north side of the room. This room is painted in historic colors to match the house, and the interior window trim, door frames and baseboards are also painted. The floor was re-carpeted after it was discovered that the original oak flooring had been removed by a previous owner, likely due to damage by termites.

The original dining room is a single-story room connected to the parlor by the new French door. It is likewise connected to the west side bedroom through an original door and also to the west-side bathroom and the north-side kitchen addition. Central to this room, however, is the staircase leading to the dormer rooms above. This staircase is located on the south wall of the dining room and is entirely enclosed on both sides. When closed, a central door on the south wall hides the staircase entirely. This room also contains an original double-hung, four-over-four window as well as an original exterior door. The oak floor (likely not original) has been restored, and the walls have been papered with a historically appropriate pattern. An oak-floored trap door, leading to the partial cellar, is located in the southwest corner of the room. This was added to the house when the original exterior cellar door was removed to make room for the main-floor bathroom. The original staircase is still visible under the bathroom addition next to the newer relocated staircase that opens onto the dining room. The dining room formerly contained the only source of heat for the entire house. A vintage 1940s natural gas floor furnace, located in the northwest corner of the room between the bathroom and kitchen, was removed when the house was fitted with a modern forced air HVAC system throughout.

The main floor bedroom is located in the southwest corner of the house and is accessible through both the dining room and the front entry hall. This room is smaller in size than the parlor room as it also contains an under-stair closet (the main staircase to the second floor is not centered but runs just to the west of the main north-south axis of the house.) This room contains two double-hung, four-over-four windows, one on the west side and one on the south side. All of the windows and doors in this room are original including the hinges, sash pins, door locks, key plates and door knobs. It has also been papered in a historically appropriate pattern. As in the rest of the original house, all of the trim work in this room is painted.

On the west side of house is an ADA compliant bathroom with a new door wide enough for wheel chair access. This bathroom is non-conforming in terms of the original house but allows the current owners to legally lease the building as professional office space. It contains an ADA compliant sink and stool and a non-compliant shower unit should the house ever return to its former use as a single-family residence. The 1955 kitchen addition is also accessed through the dining room. This room has been restored and retains its original linoleum, stained and varnished wood cabinetry, window frames and trim. The counter top was replaced due to the poor condition of the original, but retains the same style and color as the former. The exterior doorway of the kitchen was replaced by the current owners to meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This required the removal of one section of the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 **Page** 4

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

original cabinetry to provide for a slight re-configuration of the appliances, making it more efficient as an office kitchen/break room.

The second floor of the original house is of very simple design. The second-floor staircase, accessed through a doorway on the south wall of the dining room, ends in a small second-floor landing. This is the location of the centered double-hung, four-over-four window located directly over the front door. Two doors, to the right and left of the landing, lead to two small bedrooms. Each room contains a full-sized, double-hung, four-over-four window on the gabled ends and two smaller windows, one each on the north and south sides. The west bedroom contains a very tiny closet in the northeast corner.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Statement of Significance

The Damon Runyon House is being nominated under Criterion B with national significance for its association with Damon Runyon, a prominent newspaper columnist, sportswriter, novelist, playwright and screenwriter in the first half of the twentieth century. The author of well known musical works such as *Guys and Dolls*, Damon Runyon is regarded as the father of "Broadway" in New York City and the creator of "Runyonese" a syntax and grammar he invented to convey New York vernacular speech in the 1920s.

The property meets the requirements of Criteria Consideration C as the only extant resource associated with Damon Runyon. A careful search of the memorials associated with Damon Runyon include a thoroughbred cup race at Aqueduct sponsored by the New York Racing Association, the Damon Runyon Repertory Theater Company of Pueblo, Colorado, a city park in Pueblo, Colorado, the Damon Runyon/Walter Winchell Cancer Research Foundation and the Damon Runyon Journalism Prize sponsored by the Denver Press Club. None of these memorials is associated with any structure that Runyon lived in, owned, or was otherwise associated with as a residence or place of business.

The subject property was built in March of 1880 by Alfred Lee Runyan and his wife Libbie Damon Runyon. {"A.L. Runyan is erecting a dwelling house on the corner of third and Osage Streets." 26 March, 1880, *Manhattan Nationalist*.} An early resident of Manhattan, Kansas raised in Riley County, Alfred Lee (A.L.) is reputed to have been born in New Jersey. His father William, whose last name was Renoyan, came to Manhattan with his young son Alfred in the spring of 1855 with an immigration party led by John Pipher of the Cincinnati Land Company. The party arrived in Manhattan aboard the steamship *Hartford* with the intention of going farther west to Junction City. After some negotiation with members of the recently formed Boston Town Association, including a change of name for the new city to Manhattan, the Hartford group disembarked and set up their prefabricated buildings and platted out town lots, thus forming the nucleus of what is now downtown Manhattan Kansas.

Most members of the Boston Town Association and the Cincinnati Land Company held strong free state political views. William Renoyan, however, seems not to have come west to establish Kansas as a free state but simply to better his condition, originally intending to travel all the way to the gold fields of California. With the end of the *Hartford's* journey at the confluence of the Blue and Kansas Rivers, however, Renoyan hitched his star to the founding of the fledgling town. He also simplified the family name to Runyan. Little is known about A.L.'s childhood in Manhattan except that his father William owned a small farm and took up the printing trade. In 1868, A.L. took up the same trade and went to work for the *Manhattan Independent* and later worked in the offices of the *Manhattan Standard*. On November 7, 1868, the editor of the Standard reported that A.L. had been among the very first volunteers for the 19th Kansas Regiment which Governor Samuel Crawford himself founded, having given up his elected office to serve as the Regiment's commanding officer. The editor of the *Standard*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

noted his disappointment in A.L.'s departure as he was a "steady and faithful boy" but was glad that his skills as a writer had been recognized by the army who had appointed Runyan company clerk. A.L. promised the readers of the *Standard* an almost daily record of his experiences which were indeed published in the paper as they were received.

The 19th Kansas was a support regiment for General Sheridan in his campaign to suppress the western Indians in Kansas and Oklahoma. Luckily for Runyan, the 19th was sidetracked by a snow storm on their way to western Oklahoma Territory and narrowly missed association with General George Armstrong Custer's infamous attack on a band of peaceful Cheyennes near the Washita River in November of 1868. Runyan's letters back to Manhattan were subsequently published in full in the February 1940 issue of the *Kansas Historical Quarterly* and remain one of the best first-hand accounts historians have of Sheridan's 1868 campaign.

Upon his return to Kansas in April, 1869, Runyan continued for several years as a newspaper journalist in Manhattan and Junction City. He met and married Libbie Damon of Abilene in March 1876. A.L. then moved his new bride back to Manhattan where in partnership with C.M. Patee, a local businessman, he founded a new paper called the *Manhattan Enterprise*. This paper would continue for many years after Runyan left Manhattan and changed its name twice, once to the *Manhattan Republic* and then to the *Mercury* in 1888 (The Mercury continues as the city's only daily newspaper). It was while owner and editor of the *Enterprise* in 1880 that A.L. and Libbie Runyan purchased lot 245 in Ward 2 of the city with the intention of building the subject property. It was to be the only house the Runyans ever built or owned.

The Runyans had their first child, a son named Lee, in June of 1877. This child died a year later in June of 1878. Libbie then had a daughter in November of 1878. She was pregnant again in the spring of 1880 when they moved into their new home on Osage Street. Alfred Damon Runyan was born on October 4, 1880 in the little front parlor room of the subject property.

The small house that A.L. and Libbie built in Manhattan in 1880 reflected their desire to establish themselves as independent middle class citizens in the new city. Ownership of the *Enterprise* was A.L.'s most successful business venture. He had a bad temper, however, and was restless in his ambition to become an important newspaperman. He moved the family first to Clay Center in 1884 and then to Eureka, Kansas and eventually to Wellington, Kansas. Two more daughters were born to the couple after 1882, but Libbie's health was quickly deteriorating. Financially broken in a libel judgment against him in Wellington, Kansas, A.L. moved the family to Pueblo, Colorado in 1891 ostensibly for Libbie's health. A.L. was no longer an editor/owner but worked as an employee journalist. Libbie returned to Abilene, Kansas with the couple's daughters six months later where she soon died of tuberculosis. The girls were taken in by Libbie's Abilene relatives, but Damon remained in Pueblo. Damon would not see his sisters again for thirty years.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Over the next few years, Damon tried to raise himself in Pueblo, working at newspapers, occasionally attending school, and living in boarding houses with his now alcoholic and frequently unemployed father. Little "Al" soon dropped the use of his first name and subsequently was known only as Damon. He changed his surname as a teenage reporter when a typist misspelled it as "Runyon" and he liked the way it looked in print. At 14, Damon moved alone to Denver to work as a cub reporter. At the age of 18, the same age his father was when he joined the 19th Kansas, Damon joined the Colorado Volunteers to fight in the Spanish American War. He similarly wrote a vivid first-hand account of the Battle of Manila, in spite of the fact that it had happened three weeks before his arrival. To add even more flourish to his story, Runyon falsely claimed to be the youngest enlisted man in the U.S. Army (14 years old), changing his birth year to 1884, thus shaving four years off his real age. Runyon maintained this fabrication for the rest of his life, fooling everyone, including Paramount Pictures, who used the 1884 date to commemorate his Manhattan birthplace in 1949. Shortly after returning from the war, Runyon's colorful reporting on Denver sporting events caught the attention of William Randolph Hearst, who hired him as a fresh-faced reporter for the *New York Sporting News*.

As a New York sportswriter recently arrived from the West, Runyon was fascinated by the strange and secret underworld of sports and organized crime at the turn of the century. His first short stories centered on these connections, but before long he was writing stories about his and his father's life in the West in little towns like Manhattan and Pueblo. In essence, Damon Runyon became the successful journalist and writer (even playwright and novelist) that his father had aspired to become growing up in Manhattan, Kansas.

The subject property has deep ties to the development of the city of Manhattan. The house that A.L. and Libbie built at 3rd (now 4th) and Osage was not remarkable for the time in which it was constructed, but represents an element of Manhattan society that certainly helped shape the new community. Osage Street was platted by the Boston Land Company in 1854. It was three blocks from Poyntz Avenue, the main business street. It was close enough for A.L. to walk to work, but far enough from the traffic of the town center to raise a family. It was also a smart economic move as the Runyans built a small house in a good section of town. Valued at \$500.00 at the time of construction, the Runyans sold the house two years later for \$1000.00. This amazing increase in the value of the house mirrored the rapid development of the city at this same time. A.L. and his father, William, were instrumental in promoting the town through their work as printers and journalists and as local property owners. A.L. in particular was considered a very "going concern" and an aggressive businessman in founding a rival paper to the *Standard*. It was this kind of fierce, even explosive activity that helped convince the state legislature to locate the new Morrill Land Grant school in Manhattan. Just like the better known college and town founders (John Pipher, Issac Goodnow, Washington Marlatt Joseph Denison and the Higinbotham brothers), A.L. Runyan was a city promoter who caught the fever of western expansion and passed it on to his son.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Section number 8 Page 4

According to urban historians, towns and cities like Manhattan were gaining steadily in terms of population as a result of a rich agricultural hinterland, the arrival of the railroads and state supported institutions like Kansas State Agricultural College. While Manhattan did not experience the explosive growth of a Chicago, it did see a significant shift in population from rural to urban residents in this period, doubling in population from 1173 in 1870 to 2105 residents a decade later when Damon Runyon was born. Larger, better appointed homes were being built in the city in 1880, but A.L.'s house was far more typical of an average working family. These more modest structures were modeled on the homes of well-to-do and represented a great leap into the middle class of American society. It is this kind of residence and its architecture that is in the greatest jeopardy of being lost in Manhattan today.

The subject property became known in the community as the birthplace of the famous writer in the 1920s and 30s as Runyon's star was rising as a popular journalist, author and screenwriter for Hollywood. Manhattan's citizens have, for many decades, taken pride in the fact that Damon Runyon was born in Manhattan, overshadowing the roles of his father and grandfather in the founding of the city. Damon reportedly returned to Manhattan himself twice to visit his family's home (one documented visit on his way to New York from Texas) and perhaps to visit his mother's relatives in Abilene. Damon Runyon died of throat cancer in 1946, just as his screenplays were hitting the top of the box office charts. In 1949, Paramount Pictures, for whom Runyon did several screen plays, placed an engraved marble slab on the corner of the subject property to commemorate his life and celebrate the release of a new film based on one of Runyon's short stories. This was a major cultural event for the citizens of Manhattan. The stone is still extant on the subject property.

Since then, Manhattanites have continued to regard the subject property as the Damon Runyon House. Many citizens consider Runyon's career the city's strongest link between the Big Apple of New York and the Little Apple of Manhattan Kansas. At the time of Runyon's death on December 10, 1946, the *Mercury-Chronicle* reported, "the Manhattan-born author and columnist died last night in New York's Memorial Hospital at the age of 62 years. Widely quoted as an author and interpreter of life on Broadway, Damon was the son of A.L. Runyan, editor and publisher of the *Manhattan Enterprise*. The name "Damon" was given him at his birth on Oct. 4, 1884, because that was the maiden name of his mother . . . the Runyon home was on North Fourth Street." At the time the controversial Tuttle Creek Dam was opened in the mid 1950s, a Corps of Engineers and Chamber of Commerce commemorative publication listed the Runyon House as one of Manhattan's most interesting places to visit.

In November of 2001, to cite a more recent example, the *Christian Science Monitor* ran a story on the effects of September 11th on the citizens of the "Little Apple." The reporter noted in that article that, "the Little Apple trademarked name goes back 25 years when then Mayor Terry Glasscock presented New York Mayor Ed Koch with a photo of the Damon Runyon house. That the writer of so many Broadway hits came from here seemed enough reason for a sister-city relationship." Former residents of

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 5

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Manhattan continue to point with pride to Damon Runyon's birthplace as part of their identity. In May of 2004, a former resident of Manhattan wrote an editorial to the *Manhattan Mercury* to encourage the city to consider building a visitor's center that would highlight the accomplishments of their most famous resident. Given the long history of the Runyan family in Manhattan, Damon Runyon's own admission that much of his work was inspired by the stories his father had related to him of growing up in Manhattan, and the continuous identification of the subject property with the sister-city relationship of Manhattan, Kansas with Manhattan, New York, it is reasonable for the subject property to be entered into the National Register of Historic Places and the nationally acclaimed Damon Runyon identified as a Manhattan, Kansas native son.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas

Bibliography

Archival Sources

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This biography of DR quotes Damon Runyon, Jr. as saying he father treated him to endless fascinating stories, as his father before him had been by *his* old man. {So fantastic were many of Damon's tales, particularly those of soldiering and the Wild West, that his son simply didn't believe them.} "I thought he was telling a lot of stretchers to be amusing."

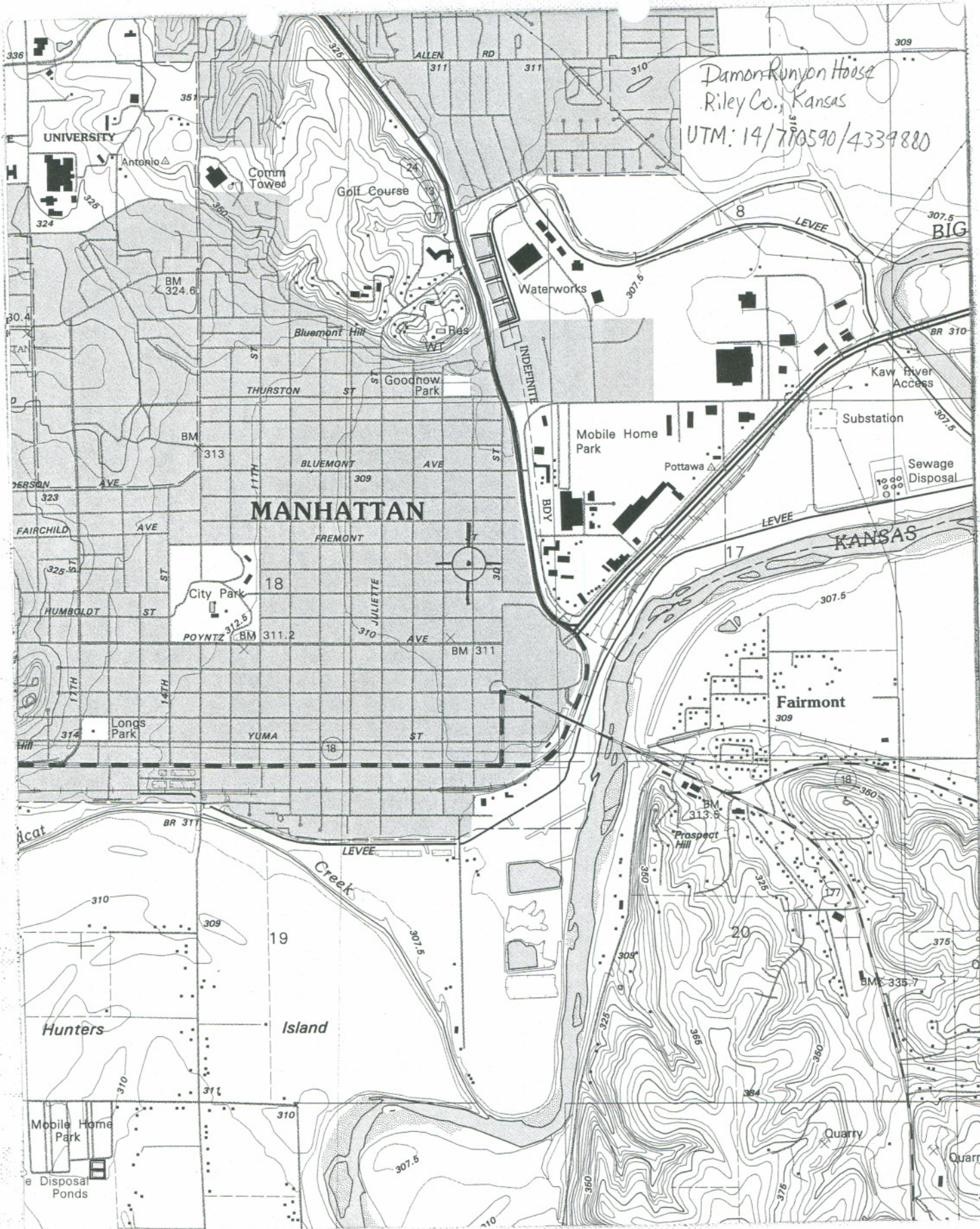
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(This book states that DR's grandfather was William Renoyan who was a member of an early immigrant family to America that settled in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. Renoyan was trying to get to the gold fields of California when he and several other families bought passage on the Hartford. When it ran aground in Manhattan KS, Renoyan "combined printing jobs with farming and changed the family name to Runyan"

Runyon, Damon, Jr. *Father's Footsteps* (New York) 1954.



Damon Runyon House
Riley Co., Kansas
UTM: 14/780590/4339880